



Purpose of Advisory Design Panel

Design Panel acts as an independent advisory review body without authority for approval of projects but rather through a democratic process either expresses a position of support or non-support. Appointments to Design Panel must originate from the BCSLA Design Panel Sub-Committee which forwards a Member application for review and approval by the municipal or city council.

In general the primary function of Design Panel is to review the design of projects brought forward by the Planning Department prior to rezoning or issuance of Development Permit. The exact scope of review will vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction with some locations requesting Design Panel input on topics from building paint colour, to signs and awning design.

The purpose of establishing guidelines for procedure of BCSLA Members is to ensure a fair appraisal of development proposals through the use of a consistent framework. The BCSLA encourages an open process in which the applicant is present during all phases of presentation, review and commentary of the project brought forward. The guidelines will help Municipalities, Cities and the BCSLA confidently answer any challenge to the Design Panel process. Although the BCSLA has developed these guidelines for use by its Members, it should be noted that Design Panel procedures vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction in type of review, content of review and review process.

The BCSLA has developed these guidelines in order to ensure that there is a minimum standard of fairness and an efficient process which will help to promote a high level of professional conduct by our Membership.

Objectives

In order to ensure a fair review process consistent with other municipalities and cities the BCSLA encourages its Design Panel Members to adopt these objectives.

- .1 To ensure a predictable review and adjudication process which is clearly communicated to all Design Panel applicants.
- .2 To ensure a fair and open forum for project review.
- .3 To ensure well-documented Minutes which detail the Design Panels deliberations which will allow the applicant to review the proceedings and provide the appropriate design response.
- .4 To encourage municipalities and cities to prepare a list of materials required for Design Panel review.
- .5 To encourage municipalities and cities to develop a regular schedule for Design Panel meetings.

The BCSLA encourages the municipalities and cities to provide the appropriate amount of background information for Design Panel Members which could include the following:

- .1 A clear statement of planning objectives, constraints or guidelines, and contextual considerations.



Objectives (continued)

- .2 A clear statement describing the applicant's submission which would include a project brief, terms of reference, practical constraints and design objectives.
- .3 A clear and concise summary of the issues and recommendations from Design Panel should be provided to the applicant.

Design Panel Nomination and Appointment Guidelines

The BCSLA encourages all its Registered Members to serve on Design Panels. The BCSLA Design Panel Sub-Committee has been set up to oversee the process of reviewing and updating the Design Panel guidelines, reviewing the qualifications of Registered Members who have come forward and expressed an interest in serving on Design Panel, recommending appointments to municipalities and cities and encouraging municipalities and cities who do not have Design Panels to consider adopting this review process.

The BCSLA ADP Sub-Committee Chair will not be permitted to allow his/her name to stand for ADP Membership. If the candidate is the only qualified ADP member in the region the BCSLA Board of Directors will appoint the ADP Member

Eligibility and Application Procedure

All Registered Landscape Architects in good standing are eligible to serve on Design Panel. The procedure for nomination and appointment follows the following steps:

Nomination

The BCSLA Design Panel Sub-Committee will consider the following criteria when reviewing nomination applications.

- .1 Willingness to serve on a designated Design Panel as indicated on the completed Design Panel application form.
- .2 General familiarity with the municipality or city, but not necessarily a resident in that municipality or city.
- .3 Relevant professional experience and background with regard to the types of projects reviewed by the Design Panel.
- .4 Freedom from any conflict of interest in both business and personal relationships that would affect the objectivity of advice given as a Design Panel member.
- .5 Although previous experience as a representative of the BCSLA on Design Panel is not a criteria. The previous record of experience when available will be reviewed by the BCSLA and forwarded to the city or municipality.



Nomination (continued)

- .6 A BCSLA Member age, gender, race, religion or political affiliations will not be a criterion for nomination.

Appointment Restrictions

- .1 Must be a BCSLA Registered Member in good standing.
- .2 BCSLA Member shall have completed the Design Panel application form and been nominated by the BCSLA Design Panel committee. Members shall not independently approach municipality or city to seek nomination for Design Panel as a representative of the BCSLA.

Procedure for Applications and Nomination

The BCSLA Design Panel Sub-Committee will receive applications for nomination to Design Panel throughout the calendar year. In order to assist the BCSLA member in understanding the degree of commitment the Design Panel Sub-Committee shall make available to the applicant the following information:

- .1 Current membership of Design Panel
- .2 Duration of Design Panel appointment
- .3 Frequency and approximate length of Design Panel meetings
- .4 Types of projects usually reviewed
- .5 Other nominations put forward at the same time
- .6 Special considerations

The nomination procedure for Design Panel follows these steps:

- .1 Municipality or city contacts the BCSLA to inform the Design Panel Sub-Committee that a position on Design Panel has become available for a Landscape Architect, or the BCSLA seeks applications for nomination for Design Panel position after confirming that the term of a BCSLA Member currently sitting on a Design Panel is coming to an end.
- .2 BCSLA forwards completed applications from interested Registered Members in good standing to the municipality or city for review and nomination to council for Design Panel appointment.
- .3 BCSLA informs the Member that his or her application is successful and either provides a contact at the city or municipality for the Member to get in touch with, or provides information with regard to the start of the term.

In the event that the BCSLA Design Panel Sub-Committee does not have any applications on file for Design Panel nominations for the particular municipality or city the Design Panel Sub-Committee will seek out Members of the BCSLA who have not yet expressed a willingness to serve. In the event no candidate is found, and with the approval of the municipality or city, the member currently serving on Design Panel may be asked to serve an additional term or remain on Design Panel until an applicant comes forward, and is approved by the municipal or city council.



Procedures (continued)

Nominations of BCSLA Members by organizations other than the BCSLA shall be the business of those organizations. Registered Members of the BCSLA who serve on Design Panels not as Landscape Architects are obligated to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the BCSLA Bylaws and Standards of Professional Conduct and Practice.

Conduct of Landscape Architects

BCSLA Members serving on Design Panel are to conduct themselves in a professional manner consistent with the BCSLA Standards of Professional Conduct and Practice. Design Panels have been set up as impartial forums in which professional advice is provided by panel members to aide the planning staff and municipal council in their decision making process. BCSLA Members accept the following responsibilities while serving on Design Panel:

- .1 To give impartial, professional advice on proposals and policies which affect the physical environment of the city or municipality.
- .2 To inform the BCSLA, city or municipality when persons fraudulently represent themselves as Landscape Architects.
- .3 To represent the profession of Landscape Architecture in a positive manner while performing a public service.
- .4 To offer objective views on design that relate to the context of the community's physical environment. The Design Panel member should refrain from expressing subjective views against the style selected by the design proponents.
- .5 To withdraw from the review, discussion and evaluation of a project brought before Design Panel if the panel member or the panel member firm, is involved in the application brought forward.
- .6 To refrain from using the position on Design Panel to promote his or her own business in the city or municipality where he or she is a panel member.
- .7 To refrain from making professional overtures to the applicants and resist lobbying from the applicants.
- .8 To attend meetings regularly or notify the city or municipality when unable to attend Design Panel meetings.
- .9 To obtain the permission of the BCSLA Design Panel committee prior to accepting a Design Panel appointment and resign that appointment after a period of two years. BCSLA Members may be re-nominated for a subsequent term upon receiving written permission from the BCSLA Design Panel Sub-Committee and the city or municipality.



Design Panel Review Suggested Check List

In addition to specific components identified by the city or municipal planning staff and the requirements of the local Building Bylaws, Zoning Bylaws and Sign Bylaws the Design Panel members may consider some of the following topics as a guideline for review:

Overall Project Analysis:

- .1 Summary of project objectives.
- .2 Project program and the fit with project objectives.
- .3 Design philosophy.

City Context:

- .1 Impact on views.
- .2 Impact on city skyline.
- .3 Compatibility with city guidelines and planning objectives.

Neighbourhood Context:

- .1 Relationship and impact of adjacent land use.
- .2 Relationship and impact on the scale and rhythm of the neighbourhood.
- .3 Impact of the character and massing on the surrounding neighbourhood.
- .4 Compatibility with neighbourhood guidelines and planning objectives.

Site Context and Site Planning:

- .1 Relationship to adjacent buildings, sites or land use.
- .2 Effect of shadow and daylight within the site and shading of adjacent sites.
- .3 Site privacy and overlook.
- .4 Compatibility of design with site context, and site grades.
- .5 Relationship to existing trees or landscape features.
- .6 Compatibility of materials to project and site context.
- .7 Contribution to and compatibility with neighbourhood character.
- .8 Relationship of landscape site design to building design and project objectives.
- .9 Effectiveness of building siting.
- .10 Provision for parking, vehicular and pedestrian site circulation.

Streetscape:

- .1 Effectiveness of building or landscape interface with street.
- .2 Contribution to the street rhythm and overall street design.
- .3 Appropriateness of street design with respect to site context and location.
- .4 Provision of rain and wind protection.
- .5 Appropriateness of street furniture, and both hard and soft streetscape elements.
- .6 Scale of streetscape with respect to context and adjacent site uses.
- .7 Level of detail and relationship to human scale.



Landscape Design:

- .1 General scale, articulation, and appropriateness of form.
- .2 Location and quality of environment created for passive and active uses.
- .3 Effects of sun and shadow on project amenities.
- .4 Suitability of plant species and appropriate density of planting.
- .5 Comments on growing medium depths and size of planting areas.
- .6 Provision for Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CEPTD) principles.
- .7 Appropriateness of irrigation strategy.
- .8 Location, scale and relationship of entries to building and site context.
- .9 Appropriateness of screening and enhancement of views.

Building Design:

- .1 General massing and overall articulation.
- .2 Appropriateness of form and use.
- .3 Roofscape forms and treatment of building services.
- .4 Facade articulation and fenestration.
- .5 Quality and design of finishes.
- .6 Definition of building entry.
- .7 Interior and exterior relationships.